



Knowledgeable Notary

NEBRASKA SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION: NOTARY

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Message from Secretary of State John Gale

Nebraska's new notary law has now been in effect for six months. Last summer two members of my staff and I conducted 19 Notary seminars across the state with the intent of "bringing Government to the people". Attendance at our seminars exceeded 3,100 people.

In conjunction with the new Notary laws, our office decided to help notaries achieve and adhere to higher standards because the law specifically addresses procedures and standards for notarization. For instance, as part of our procedure for issuing notary commissions and authenticating documents, our staff now verifies each notarization (signature and seal) prior to processing. If we encounter notarizations that have not been properly executed, we contact the notary to advise how to correctly notarize in the future.

One of the new requirements of the notary law is that first time applicants must successfully pass a written test prior to making application, filing their surety bond, and paying the \$30.00 commission fee to our office. Our office has had over 1,000 requests for the notary test and the majority of those taking the tests passed with flying colors!

In closing, our office welcomes any questions you might have about being a commissioned notary public for the State of Nebraska. We have staff available between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to answer any questions you may have about notarization. Remember: There is no such thing as a dumb question when it comes to correctly notarizing a legal document.

Our Notary office has added many features to the Secretary of State's website. The following is a directory of the newest information you can find on our site:

- 1) **Primary notary page:** <http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/> with links to available information and forms.
- 2) **Nebraska's Official Notary Handbook may be found here:**
http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/notary_handbook.pdf
- 3) **Powerpoint presentation on Nebraska notary law is available at this link:**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/ppt/law.ppt>
- 4) **Procedures for requesting and taking the notary test:**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/testing.pdf>
- 5) **Approved form for initial (new) notary applicant:**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/application.pdf>
- 6) **Approved renewal application form:**
http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/renewal_app.pdf
- 7) **Suggested Bond form** (for either initial or renewal applicants):
http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/bond_04.pdf
- 8) **Nebraska notary statutes:**
<http://statutes.unicam.state.ne.us/corpus/chapall/chap64.html>
- 9) **Change of address form:**
http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/change_of_address_form.pdf
- 10) **Complaint form:** http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/complaint_form.pdf
- 11) **Acknowledgement forms:**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/acknowledgement.html>
- 12) **Sample journal page:** <http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/journal.pdf>
and **instructions to complete the journal page:**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/pdf/instructions.pdf>
- 13) **Frequently asked questions (FAQ):**
<http://www.sos.state.ne.us/business/notary/faq.html>

Four Important Items to Remember:

- ❖ If notaries carefully follow the new statutory mandates and request proper proof of identification, they may be able to help deter instances of identity theft which is having a profound and adverse effect on many people nationwide.

- ❖ The new law also specifically prohibits those who are not licensed attorneys from advertising the services of a “notario publico”.

If you are aware of such unlawful occurrences, please fill out the complaint form on our website and send it to our office immediately.

- ❖ Our office recommends that you have your commission expiration date inscribed, in its entirety—month, day, and year—on your notary seal. One of the most common reasons for rejection of documents that our office sees is that the notary has written in an incorrect or incomplete expiration date. It’s also a great reminder for you of when it’s time to renew your commission. (Don’t let your commission expire or you will be considered a “new” notary and will be required to successfully pass the notary test!)

- ❖ Reminder: If you move, you must notify the Secretary of State’s office of any address change by filling out a change of address notification form within 45 days of your move.

**Questions or comments about information contained in this publication may be directed to:
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